



**McGregor W. Scott**  
United States Attorney  
Eastern District of California

**NEWS RELEASE**

*Sacramento*  
501 I. Street, Ste 10-100  
Sacramento CA 95814  
Tel: (916) 554-2700  
TTY: (916) 554-2855

*Fresno*  
2500 Tulare Street, Ste 4401  
Fresno, CA 93721  
Tel: (559) 497-4000  
TTY: (559) 497-4500

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: Patty Pontello, 916-554-2706

<http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/cae>

**Stockton Men Sent to Federal Prison For**  
**Possessing Automatic Weapons**

SACRAMENTO—United States Attorney McGregor W. Scott announced today that STEVE NEMEE, 36, was sentenced by United States Chief District Judge David F. Levi to 18 months in federal prison today. NEMEE pleaded guilty on December 13, 2005, to the federal charge of possessing an unregistered machinegun.

This case is the product of an extensive/joint investigation by the Stockton Police Department, the California Department of Justice Firearms Division, and the United States Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives.

According to court documents, a federal search warrant was executed at the defendant's residence on Hickory Avenue in Stockton on June 8, 2005. In a room above the garage, agents found an IMBEL model L1A1 Sporter .308 caliber rifle which had been modified to fire in a fully automatic mode. It was also determined the room was set up for an indoor marijuana grow operation, and a small amount of processed marijuana was located in the room.

NEMEE's codefendants, Michael Little, 41, and Jeffery Keefover, 35, also pleaded guilty to charges related to possession of unregistered machine guns. Defendant Little was sentenced on February 23, 2006, to 22 months in federal prison, and defendant Keefover was sentenced on March 2, 2006 to 24 months in federal prison.

The investigation commenced after the report of an explosion at the Union Planning Mill in Stockton on April 30, 2005. Stockton Police Officers arrived to find a hole in the side of the building reportedly caused by the discharge of a makeshift cannon/mortar-type device. Although codefendant Little was originally charged with offenses arising out of that bombing, those charges were dismissed in return for the guilty pleas to the machinegun charge.

According to Richard Bender, the Assistant United States Attorney who prosecuted the case, the three defendants, who had little or no criminal history, were gun enthusiasts who had a fascination for Rambo-style assault weapons which they collected and used to go shooting out in the country. The three graduated into automatic weapons after one of them learned how to convert a semiautomatic assault rifle to fire in fully automatic mode. Thereafter they converted several weapons. They were caught in an undercover operation by agents of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, & Explosives.

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